USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

ARMY CULTURAL CHANGE AND EFFECTIVE MEDIA RELATIONS

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	Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188
Report Documentation Page	*Form Approved* *OMB No. 0704-0188*

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1. REPORT DATE **15 MAR 2006**	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE **Army Cultural Change and Effective Media Relations**	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
	5b. GRANT NUMBER
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER

6. AUTHOR(S) **Daniel Baggio**	5d. PROJECT NUMBER
	5e. TASK NUMBER
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) **U.S. Army War College,Carlisle Barracks,Carlisle,PA,17013-5050**	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER

9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT
See attached.

15. SUBJECT TERMS

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES **24**	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT **unclassified**	b. ABSTRACT **unclassified**	c. THIS PAGE **unclassified**			

ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Colonel Daniel L. Baggio

TITLE: Army Cultural Change and Effective Media Relations

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 07 March 2006   WORD COUNT: 5,922   PAGES: 24

KEY TERMS: Public Affairs, PAO, Climate, Embed, Strategic Leader

CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

This paper focuses on the Army's need to be more successful in communicating their side of the story to American and international publics, and posits that Army culture and climate must continue to change in the direction that encourages a more open relationship with the media. To support this position, this paper articulates the strategic leadership role of public affairs professionals and their responsibility to the commander and staff. Because we can learn from the past, it then examines media embedding from a historical context from the Mexican War to the recent "ad hoc" media embedding experience during Operation Iraqi Freedom. It then examines the effectiveness of the current embedding policy, to include the media's issues and changes that should be made in the future to affect Army climate and culture. This paper concludes by discussing current Army cultural norms with respect to the media and proposes five recommendations the Army must consider to fully embrace a climate and encourage a culture of true media engagement. These recommendations address promoting public affairs doctrine, educating the media, developing media and military relationships, growing public affairs leaders, and rewarding public affairs competence.

ARMY CULTURAL CHANGE AND EFFECTIVE MEDIA RELATIONS

There have been literally countless accounts throughout American military history of both good and bad episodes with the media. During the 20th century we saw extremes in the press. In World War II, both American fighting men and their leaders were portrayed as prince-like heroes who could do little wrong, which distinctly encouraged public support. Conversely, there was an all time nadir one generation later, which depicted the Vietnam War as a breeding ground of disgruntled soldiers and leader incompetence that contributed to declining public support and strategic American failure. In both extremes the truth was somewhere in the middle, but the power of media-created perception ruled the day. It is fair to say that there is little doubt that the importance and influence of media on the modern battlefield are at an all-time high. Recent U.S. Department of Defense initiatives, such as the robust media embed program during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), have reinforced this perception.

In my decade of public affairs (PA) experiences, even with successes and increased emphasis from senior leaders to encourage proactive media engagement, Army culture has caused many leaders to be overly cautious in the presence of reporters.[1] This paper focuses on the Army's need to be more successful in communicating their side of the story to American and international publics, and posits that Army culture and climate must continue to change in the direction that encourages a more open relationship with the media. To support this position, this paper articulates the strategic leadership role of public affairs professionals and their responsibility to the commander and staff. Because we can learn from the past, it then examines media embedding from a historical context from the Mexican War to the recent "ad hoc" media embedding experience during Operation Iraqi Freedom. It then examines the effectiveness of the current embedding policy, to include the media's issues and changes that should be made in the future to affect Army climate and culture. This paper concludes by discussing current Army cultural norms with respect to the media and proposes five recommendations the Army must consider to fully embrace a climate and encourage a culture of true media engagement. These recommendations address promoting public affairs doctrine, educating the media, developing media and military relationships, growing public affairs leaders, and rewarding public affairs competence.

Culture and Climate

Before proceeding further it is important to understand the framework of culture and climate, to include the difference and relationship to each other. Edgar Schein defines culture as:

A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way you perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.[2]

Additionally, a report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) defines military culture as: "…how things are done in a military organization. Military culture is an amalgam of values, customs, traditions, and their philosophical underpinnings that, over time, has created a shared institutional ethos."[3] Conversely, the CSIS report states: "Climate is essentially how members of an organization feel about the organization."[4] Climate consists of the conditions that precede the existence of a group culture. Schein identifies the following six Primary Embedding Mechanisms to create a climate that in-turn build a culture:

1. What leaders pay attention to, measure, and control on a regular basis

2. How leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crises

3. Observed criteria by which leaders allocate scarce resources

4. Deliberate role modeling, teaching, and coaching

5. Observed criteria by which leaders allocate rewards and status

6. Observed criteria by which leaders recruit, select, promote, retire, and excommunicate organizational members [5]

Good climates create the conditions in the long term that build into good cultures. With respect to public affairs, unit climates that recognize, place importance on and reward PA organizations and professionals, while encouraging proactive media engagement, are key to success in today's global information environment (GIE). This is on track with the direction and guidance provided in Joint Publication 3-61, Public Affairs, which states:

Public affairs officers are an integral part of the staff at all levels of command. The public affairs officer (PAO) is the joint force commander's (JFC's) principal spokesperson and senior advisor on public affairs (PA). To gain such a position of trust, the PAO must have the ability to provide information to the media, to the commander, and to the supporting forces in near real time. The key to success in this endeavor is not limited to planning, training, and equipping PAOs, but integrating PA operations into all levels of the command. Whereas the media may have access to tactical units during hostilities, PAOs may have access to information and to senior-level staff officers on a continuing basis.[6]

The PAO and Strategic Leadership

Senior level PAOs, because of their influence and close relationships with senior military leaders, are in a position to provide advice to or even be strategic leaders. More accurately,

they should aspire to be true masters of the strategic art – integrating and combining the three roles of strategic leader, strategic practitioner, and strategic theorist.[7] As this paper will show, especially today in the era of instant world-wide communication and a never-ending "virtual" media cycle, the functional staff expertise of PA professionals is critical to strategic success or failure. While recognizing that only one or two percent will attain a strategic leadership position, the *Strategic Leadership Primer* made the point that strategic leadership is a shared responsibility between the staff and the leader, when it stated: "…anyone in a staff position working for a strategic leader should be well-trained as a strategic thinker or they cannot adequately support the leader."[8]

While PAOs are doctrinally considered "special staff" and sometimes counted among the "personal staff" and advisors to the commander, this paper will show that they are leaders of the most important magnitude.[9] Research shows that the role of the PAO as a subject matter expert and the person on "the inside" with media, coupled with commander access and thorough understanding of the strategic picture, are paramount to success on the modern battlefield. Back in 2000, Navy Lieutenant Commander John F. Kirby called for making PA an "operational function." He stated: "The speed at which the world communicates, the ever-present threat of asymmetric warfare, and the increasingly important role of domestic and international support for military operations make public affairs a real force multiplier."[10] This is further supported by Army doctrine in FM 46-1: "An Army compelled to fight and win in the information age has no option but to leverage public affairs and derive its maximum contribution to combat power."[11]

The Strategic Corporal

This influence of the public affairs professional goes hand-in-hand with the paradigm of the "strategic corporal":

> A strategic corporal is a soldier that possesses technical mastery in the skill of arms while being aware that his judgment, decision-making and action can all have strategic and political consequences that can affect the outcome of a given mission and the reputation of his country. [12]

The "strategic corporal" is one of those simple but very profound concepts that modern PAOs and senior leaders must grapple with aggressively and intelligently. They must ensure media understanding is saturated at the lowest levels or they may find themselves pinned flat to the mat when subordinates fall short of expectations because of a lack of situational awareness and context. Although the actions of one soldier on the tactical scene who has strategic impact is

nothing new, the coupling of this concept with the advent of instant media exposure has magnified it exponentially.

The attention required from top leadership to the lowest common denominator ties in nicely with Schein's second primary embedding mechanism, in that leaders must not shy away from media when in a crisis situation.[13] An excellent example was the "double tap" incident in Fallujah on November 13, 2004, where a young Marine shot an apparently helpless Iraqi insurgent in a building while a NBC television crew recorded it. There was more to the story. It turns out that these same Marines encountered similar situations the day before, evidenced by the following: "Some of the tactics said to be used by the insurgents included playing dead and attacking, surrendering and attacking, and rigging dead or wounded with bombs. In the November 13th incident mentioned above, the US Marine apparently believed the insurgent was playing dead."[14] There was justification in the eyes of the U.S. Marines, who redeemed the young Marine in the end, as he was determined innocent. But the damage was done, leaving an indelible stain. Television, radio, newspapers and magazines around the world carried the story in an unfavorable perspective, including Aljazeera, which still promotes the story on its web site.[15] The consequence was that countless positive accomplishments were negated by one regrettable now-public event that was not readily explained.

The media environment reflected by the anecdote above is one example of why media relations are so critical today, and why Army culture must adapt to embrace the nuances involved in PA engagement to plainly explain "the rest of the story."[16] This involvement does not suggest that we could have prevented this tragic event from being reported inaccurately or in a misleading way. But, perhaps a better pre-operational briefing to the media and explanation of specific tactics, techniques and procedures used in clearing buildings or immediate contextual explanation of the situation could have mitigated misunderstanding. Further, better media training, resulting in overall better situational awareness by the young Marine also may have altered his conduct. Once again, this is not to suggest the military suppress or censor the media, but rather to help them get it right. It is the responsibility of both the commander and PAO in partnership to ensure guidance is disseminated and understood.

This discussion to embrace media nuances links back to Schein's fourth and fifth primary embedding mechanisms, which focus on setting the example and reinforcing positive behavior.[17] Empowerment is ultimately the responsibility of and begins with the most senior leader supporting a climate that nurtures media engagement. Some of the best public affairs guidance (PAG) ever given, so simple but often misunderstood or under-explained is the concept of talking "within your lane."[18] This should be "empowering" to our troops vice

"restrictive." There is a lot of stuff "within your lane"; so public affairs leaders need to help unit leaders better understand that. Amazingly, every young troop, both enlisted and young officer, who learns this at an early stage in his or her military journey, is like a freshly planted acorn. With watering and careful cultivation, that acorn will grow into a solid oak. Considering the current military operations with ample media embed opportunities and other media exposure around the world, there are a lot of acorns and a rich garden in which to plant them. To better understand where this military-media marriage needs to go and its influence on climate and eventually culture, it is relevant to get a historical view of where this relationship has been.

Evolution of Media on the Battlefield

Media embedding within military formations is not a new concept, but how the American military has dealt with media war coverage has varied and evolved over time. An examination of history tells us that the Mexican War in 1848 marked the first recorded attempt to send professional journalists to the field. In this war a consortium of newspapers sent five men, who used a combination of pony express, steamboats, railroads and the fledgling telegraph for short distances to get reports to Washington long before official Army reports arrived, much to the government's chagrin.[19] During the American Civil War, technological advances such as the telegraph, by now improved with wide-spread infrastructure, sped up reporting. Conversely, this technological change started the advent of concerted military censorship, as military leaders interrupted transmissions and arrested reporters.[20] World War I introduced and World War II refined the concept of embedding by inducting uniformed reporters into the service. In World War I the military granted embedded reporters access to the front but imposed mandatory censorship; there was little complaint due to patriotism and battlefield proximity. The military somewhat relaxed this censorship during World War II, complemented coverage with internal media such as the *Stars & Stripes* newspaper and *Armed Forces Radio*, and released enough information to generally keep the media happy. This was the golden age of war reporting from the military's vantage point.[21]

The Korean War marked a modern era which moved away from embeds. Initially there was no censorship and reporters were allowed to enter the country to gain access to the area of operations on their own. General MacArthur initially praised the media coverage, as it was favorable, but after China entered the war and the media reported successive American defeats, strict censorship was reintroduced.[22] Of course, Vietnam further soured the media-military relationship, as the media had mostly unrestricted access and no significant censorship. Television, combined with contradictory pictures being painted by the official press briefs versus

reporters' observations in the field, created a credibility gap, the stigma of which took many years to erase.[23]

During the 1983 Grenada invasion there was a blackout of media and despite journalist protests in the aftermath, the American public overwhelmingly supported the Reagan Administration's restriction of press access. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John Vessey commissioned the Sidle Panel to review military-media relationships under Brigadier General Winant Sidle, and they determined that a military press pool was the best solution in 1984.[24] A small eight-journalist pool was first used in Panama in 1989. Pool reporters were unhappy that they could only access areas after the action had happened, and independent reporters outside the pools were getting stories first.[25] During Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990-1991, media pools were expanded to 1,500 journalists. But, the media complained that restricted access channeled reporting and was thus "indirect censorship." The military was overwhelmed logistically to handle 1,500 journalists.[26]

In 1995 operations associated with Bosnia marked the first modern embedding as we know it today. Reporters were told to report all they heard unless told specifically it was off the record. This policy changed when Wall Street Journal's Tom Ricks quoted a private conversation of a brigade commander. This resulted in a sensational story for the reporter, but it ultimately ruined the future career of the commander as his comments were taken out of context. From then on all conversations were off the record unless stated otherwise; this was known as the "Ricks' Rule."[27]

Media Guidance and Embedding During OIF

Most recently during OIF, DoD took media embedding to a level never before attempted or attained. Although there has been intellectual debate amongst both media and the military as to the virtues and vices associated with integrating media into a unit, the general DoD consensus was that it was a resounding success.[28] Prior to OIF, there was guidance issued in the form of messages and orders identifying media embeds for specific short duration operations and exercises.[29] But, there was no clear long-standing policy at either DoD or Department of the Army level that provided any detail about how to accommodate embedded media at operational or tactical levels.

A 1996 DoD Directive on Joint Public Affairs Operations has a succinct section instructing combatant commanders on how to leverage public affairs and integrate media into formations. However, this directive does not use the word "embed," but it does include two paragraphs that may have supported this conceptually. One paragraph addresses media support with a "goal to

treat the news media as members of units"[30] and another addresses assisting "news media in gaining access to the full spectrum of U.S. military units and personnel conducting joint and unilateral operations."[31] The Army's 1997 FM 46-1 does have a paragraph defining media embedding and lists it as a type of media facilitation.[32] A later 2000 DoD Directive is eight pages long and has a one-page enclosure titled: Statement of DoD Principles for News Media. It is very curious that this document mentions media pooling several times and requirements for media to abide by military security ground rules (non-specified in the document), but no specific mention of embedding.[33] In the aftermath of OIF's embed experience, there has been dramatic emphasis placed on the virtues of media embedding, as documented in the May 2005 update of Joint Publication 3-61 on Public Affairs.[34] This publication is a watershed document, for it not only specifically mentions media embeds 14 times, but it emphasizes the importance and relevance of public affairs to all military operations. It is easy to draw the conclusion that robust media embed missions will and should remain a cornerstone of the military's media engagement strategy.

Issues About Embedding Media

In order to build a climate and culture conducive to healthy media engagement, it is important to consider and be aware of the media's perceptions. In the aftermath of the invasion phase of OIF, two basic criticisms were commonly alleged by the media. According to author and Navy Lieutenant Commander Brendon R. McLane, "The embedded reporters were compromised by their relationship with their units" and "the focus of their reports was too narrow."[35]

The first issue is the so-called "Stockholm syndrome," which hypothesizes that media become co-opted by the military units they cover, thereby losing objectivity in reporting.[36] This could be on a subconscious level or a conscious level. There is a natural human tendency to become part of the team and share in camaraderie. From a military perspective, media integration within a unit is welcomed, as a person understands the challenges and context for actions. A problem does occur when some journalists take it to extremes, including picking up weapons to engage the enemy along side their Army "buddies." Cynical journalists like Robert Jensen of *The Progressive Magazine* feel that when media identify too closely with their military subjects, they unconsciously allow the military to control their movements and reporting.[37] This particular criticism has primarily emanated from outside journalists, not those who recently embedded with units in Iraq and Afghanistan. Hence, the motivation behind this criticism may be dubious or is at least worth pondering.

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The second issue is the media's criticism that reporting tended to be too narrow due to close proximity to the tactical action. Many reporters believe that there is potential, when embedded at the unit level, to be so myopic that the big picture is missed. Retired journalist and CBS anchor, Dan Rather defends embedded reporters and admits that wartime journalism cannot be expected to provide the full story of all that is happening on the battlefield, but rather a first draft of history that is incomplete and possibly wrong or misleading.[38]

McLane also raises the question: "If the war had gone very badly for the United States and the Coalition forces, what would have happened to the embedding program?"[39] The view ascribed to by professor and author Douglas Porch is that military and the media have always had a strained relationship and censorship has nothing to do with the strain. He states: "The difference between World War II and Vietnam was not the presence of censorship but the absence of victory. In other conflicts, victory has erased memories of a troubled relationship; after Vietnam, the media was caught up in the quest for a scapegoat."[40] There does seem to be some truth to this hypothesis; however, cynical views are often balanced by individual interpersonal relationships and patriotism which cannot be measured. Whenever human beings are involved there is never certainty. Thom Shanker of the *New York Times* says: "Embeds in Afghanistan and Iraq, I think we agree, were a success. But the program was not really challenged. It was not really stressed. What would have happened had the combat phase in Iraq gone really, really badly…what would have happened had the American military 'won ugly'?"[41] Most Army professionals conclude that despite potential for bad news, the fairest accounts are likely to come from embedded reporters. An informal poll of Army War College students fully supports this position, as all respondents unanimously favored embedded vice unilateral reporters on the battlefield. Of the twelve responses, eleven responded based on actual deployment experience and first-hand observation, while one responded based on military exercise experience and from observing from the outside looking in at ongoing operations.[42]

In the above discussion the word "fairest" does not necessarily mean positive, let alone glowing. In this context, "fair" as it pertains to journalism, means "free from favoritism or self-interest or bias or deception; or conforming with (sic) established standards or rules."[43] Freedom of the press is guaranteed by the First Amendment to the US Constitution, which is emphasized in joint doctrine.[44] It is generally accepted, from a US national policy perspective, that an independent, "non-co-opted" media serves the public interest best. But, likewise from a US Army foxhole perspective, there is a good story, a fundamentally honest story to tell and although far from perfect – yes the Army does make mistakes - the coverage will be more

accurate with embedded reporters. Serving as a guide to facilitate the media in telling a "fair"
story, Joint Pub 3-61 lists five Fundamentals of Information to include: tell the truth, provide
timely information, practice security at the source, provide consistent information at all levels,
and tell the DoD Story. [45] The most skeptical-but-honest journalists many times prove to be
best, in that their truth trumps any unfounded enemy lies and propaganda. This is also
consistent with Joint Pub 3-61, which alludes to the fact that the media will tell a story with us or
without us; if we engage them we can help get the DoD story told accurately.

Unlike the cynics who overplay the alleged evils of the Stockholm syndrome, there are
many reporters who believe there is nothing wrong with media expressing patriotism concurrent
with their jobs as reporters. Fox News' Geraldo Rivera told it to me this way in Iraq: "I don't care
about the politics – I don't care about whether you're a Democrat or a Republican – I'm an
American first; we're Americans and we're at war. We need to win this thing and more reporters
need to just come out and see and report on the great things our troops are doing and tell the
truth." He added: "History cares much more about how wars end than how they begin."[46]
According to Colonel Franklin Childress, "Media embedding is not a flash in the pan, but the
way of the future. Neither the news media themselves nor the American or international publics
will allow the military to place the 'cone of silence' on its operations ever again."[47]

Current State of Army Culture and the Way Ahead

While current Army culture still tends to be overly cautious in terms of media engagement,
Colonel Joseph G. Curtin, Army Chief of Media Relations, says: "We are making strides.
However, anytime a soldier or commander is admonished by a superior for speaking with the
media, the damage is done. Senior leaders must set the example."[48] Shanker states: "The big
Army does, indeed, tend to be more cautious in terms of media engagement, although as a new
generation of officers and enlisted personnel mature through the system -- and have experience
with the media in Iraq and Afghanistan -- this may be changing."[49] In recent years the Army has
made a conscientious effort to improve media relations. More recently Brigadier General
Vincent K. Brooks, Chief of Army Public Affairs, led the agenda at the 2005 World Wide Army
Public Affairs Symposium with the simple but crucial theme of "Engage." General Brooks'
vision, enthusiasm and emphasis were geared at changing the Army's culture to be more
proactive.[50] There has also been recent proclivity by commanders at staff meetings and other
leadership venues to throw around catch words like be "proactive" and "engage" the media.
But, experience has shown that the follow-up and execution are too often stymied by overly-
cautious and untrusting culture.[51] Although less prevalent, many commanders unfortunately still

operate under the paradigm that the PAO is doing a good job if he keeps the media away. According to Shanker: "The most important PAO in any unit is the commander, who must empower all of his subordinates to be able to tell the Army story to the American public -- which, after all, contributes the treasury and family members to make the American military possible."[52]

Recently I experienced a benign, yet telling example of the vestiges of this cultural mindset that would rather not deal with the media.[53] Fox News journalist Geraldo Rivera wanted to attend a recent military function, and since I had a personal relationship with him, I was required to coordinate with the installation's leadership to ensure his visit would be welcome. What concerned me was not that I garnered eventual approval, but rather the palpable negativity and passive-aggressive resistance encountered from some people. One senior leader asked me: "Geraldo is not planning on filming anything, is he?" A more engaging approach should have been: "Can Geraldo cover something, oh-by-the-way now that he is here on our installation?" This was a potential good story – for both recruiting and positive public influencing, especially since he had the number one show of its time-slot. Whereas some leaders may have been overly concerned that Geraldo might do a story, the opposite should have occurred. This example shows the cultural paradigm the Army must crush if it is to excel in engaging media in the future.

On the positive side, many leaders who are now rising in the Army's ranks have experienced more contact with reporters, especially exposure to embeds. They are, by virtue of this familiarity, likely to be more media savvy. Curtin says: "Many leaders now understand the press is going to be there whether you like it or not. The realization is clear: if you don't help tell your story, somebody else will tell it for you. You may not like what they say."[54] Even those who do not like engaging the media are seeing more and more pragmatic advantages and the necessity of leveraging media like any other weapon in the arsenal. So the culture appears to be moving in a positive direction. The next step is changing the mindset from "necessary but painful" to a "continuum of transparency."[55] This "continuum of transparency" can best be described as the ultimate military to media relationship replete with savvy leadership at all levels, educated soldiers at all levels, and a virtual partnership with the media built on trust and interpersonal relationships. The foundation for cultural change has been laid with the advocacy and vision of General Brooks and the wealth of experiences of emerging young leaders with recent experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan.

There is arguably an Army culture and sub-cultures throughout the various branches within the Army. Over the last twenty years, the trend in Army PA has been the "bridging of cultures" by inoculating the PAO corps with more combat arms officers. This trend has been

well received by most combat arms leadership, since instant confidence and credibility are established before nary a word is spoken. As PAOs have their uniforms covered with "cultural symbols" such as Airborne Wings and a Ranger Tab, they tend to connect immediately with that type of leader.[56] The recognition, albeit subconscious in some cases, of these cultural symbols and their derived importance tie directly back to Schein's 'primary embedded mechanisms' five and six. Research shows that leveraging shared meaning which gets someone embedded into an organization's "in group" has a positive effect on mission accomplishment and paves the road for cultural change.

Cultural bridges make it possible to expedite the infusion of both primary embedding mechanisms and secondary articulation and reinforcement mechanisms.[57] By expanding the now opened door with the commander through interpersonal skills, aided by shared technical competence and conceptual ability, a PAO can establish or at least plant the seed to use embedding and reinforcing mechanisms.[58] Once the key interpersonal skills get someone in the "in" crowd, it is important to deftly maneuver to establish trust and confidence in and with the team, which directly leads to instilling both embedding and reinforcing mechanisms. These mechanisms, when in place, create the favorable command climate conducive to and reflective of good organizations and hence effective leadership.

Recommendations

As discussed, there are some positive trends on the cultural path to better media relationships. We clearly have embarked on a long journey, but have not yet arrived. One might ask: "How do we continue to improve and shape our culture to be more media friendly?" There are some simple things that can be done to enhance the military to media relationship, but to quote Carl Von Clausewitz from over 150 years ago: "Everything in war is simple, but the simplest thing is difficult."[59] Realizing that culture and norms are very difficult to modify, it is paramount that PAOs are competent, proactive, and have the trust of the commander and staff. To assist in realizing this positive future, this paper proposes five recommendations.

The first recommendation is to promote public affairs joint doctrine to the tactical level. Joint doctrine establishes a solid foundation at the highest levels upon which subordinate formations can nest. In this instance, Joint Pub 3-61 seems to echo and reinforce Schein's first and second primary embedding mechanisms, in that it suggests leaders need to pay attention to the importance of PA and ensure PAOs are fully integrated into the process of solving critical incidents and organizational crises.[60]

The second recommendation is to better educate media embeds on the unit's mission two levels up. Understanding the big picture context will lead to more accurate reporting which serves the media, the military and ultimately the American public. Access to the overall strategic or operational plan to give better context will help journalists to fully understand what they can and cannot report. This access would be predicated by trust, which could be better achieved when media are linked up with their unit several weeks prior to deployment.[61] To properly accomplish this education, early link-up needs to be mandated as a standing policy. Currently there is too much variance and inconsistency. Though there is some risk involved, media access to plans and operational details may not only add context and accuracy to reporting, but better accomplish the Army's communication objectives.

The third recommendation is to foster long term unit to media relationships as a whole and specifically encourage local media linkages. The first part of this recommendation addresses the issue of whether or not the defense media policy should specify long-standing media to unit relationships, including quotas for designated news media outlets. Naturally, mutual familiarity for the long haul will facilitate the education noted above and assist in developing a bond of trust. Another consideration, which directly relates to building trust, is the inclusion of known local media. Currently, there is no provision for units to locally select certain media. Local media inclusion would not only be prudent, but it supports evidence that established media relationships facilitate mission accomplishment. According to Lieutenant Colonel Rivers Johnson and the Center for Lessons Learned Newsletter 04-13: "Reporters embedded with units developed a relationship with the unit and embraced the unit, which could translate into future operations."[62]

The fourth recommendation is for PAOs to assert themselves as local leaders, a first step in becoming strategic leaders. This is in concert with Schein's fourth and fifth primary embedding mechanisms, focused on setting the example and reinforcing positive behavior.[63] This is a reciprocal process in which the PAO's competence will serve as means to internally strengthen the public affairs team, foster media relations, and build confidence in the operational commanders' ability to interface with the media. This is an evolutionary step. The public affairs leader must assess the commander's style, the situation at hand, and conduct risk analysis. The ability to be agile on the media battlefield and articulate the mitigation of obstacles to the commander will create the conditions for successful and open media relations. Understanding the relationship between culture, climate and the building blocks of embedding and reinforcing mechanisms is an important start.[64] We will also need to encourage PA professionals to be competent in the areas of conceptual, interpersonal, and technical skills.[65]

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The final recommendation is to infuse the public affairs community with the best and brightest the Army has to offer, especially from the operational career fields, and reward them accordingly. Field grade officer accessions into PAO from 1971 to 2002 indicate that out of 369 records, 229 were selected from combat arms basic branches; infantry has the most at 71.[66] For better effectiveness, the Army should not only match PAOs by basic branch to like units, but ensure they are duly recognized on par with peers in the operational career field. For this to be feasible, the Army needs to demonstrate the potential for career enhancement along this path. According to Curtin: "Officers, who have served in tough assignments, generally earn the trust and respect of their seniors. Needless to say, if you walked the walk, then you can better talk the talk!"[67] In a recent statement to the Council on Foreign Relations, Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld said: "U.S. military public affairs officers must learn to anticipate news and respond faster, and good public affairs officers should be rewarded with promotions."[68]

Conclusion

The Army Chief of Public Affairs, Brigadier General Brooks, has emphasized that the Army of the future must embrace the cultural norm of media engagement.[69] Figuratively speaking, the media, like any other tool or weapon, is a combat multiplier and when leveraged properly can provide awesome results and tell our story. Obviously, the media are not literally "ours" to control, but engagement with them can "hit the target" much like well placed rifle rounds going down range. Shanker says: "You would use every tool in your arsenal to fight and win. The media is one of those tools. You have to learn how to use it. Why ignore this one? We are now as much a part of the battlefield as weather and terrain. And even if you view us an enemy, you don't abandon the battlefield when the enemy approaches. Why not engage us?"[70] Clearly, whether or not military professionals approve of it, the media will continue to wield a great amount of power and influence. Unless we actively and wholeheartedly engage the media, we will never get our side of the story told and will conversely become further divided from them.

To bridge this divide, we need competent and confident public affairs professionals who are respected leaders in their own right. The continued infusion of combat arms officers into the ranks of PA professionals provides fresh blood and a natural bridge into the world of the strategic combat commander. Combining the trio of conceptual, interpersonal, and technical skills,[71] PAOs need to understand the current culture, and with that understanding, make deliberate steps to influence Army culture to become less hesitant and more insistent on engaging the media. Obviously, we need to continue to pursue and improve upon the inroads

made from recent embedded media operations, as it is so valuable and critical it warrants special attention for future success. Finally, cultural reform will not happen over night, but progress continues to be made and the seeds have been sown for a new crop of young leaders – the future strategic leaders of our Army.

Endnotes

[1]Daniel L. Baggio, The author has served ten years in Army public affairs assignments. These include joint assignments at North American Aerospace Defense Command, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, and most recently as the PAO and spokesman for Fort Hood and The Third U.S. Armored Corps. Combat zone experience included fourteen months in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom and multiple short deployments to the Balkans during the Kosovo Air Campaign and NATO Humanitarian Mission to Albania.

[2]Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture & Leadership (notes compiled by Ted Nellen),* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992); available from http://www.tnellen.com/ted/tc/schein.html; Internet; accessed 05 February 2006.

[3]Walter Ulmer, Joseph Collins, and T. O. Jacobs, *American Military Culture in the Twenty-First Century: A Report of the CSIS International Security Program* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2000), XVIII.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture & Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992), 81.

[6]Office of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Public Affairs,* Joint Publication 3-61 (Washington, D.C.: Joint Staff, 09 May 2005), vii.

[7]Stephen A. Shambach, ed., *Strategic Leadership Primer,* 2d ed. (Carlisle, PA: Department of Command, Leadership and Management, United States Army War College, 2004), 2.

[8]Ibid., 2-3.

[9]Special Staff. [JP 1-02] Definition: All staff officers having duties at a headquarters and not included in the general (coordinating) staff group or in the personal staff group. The special staff includes certain technical specialists and heads of services, e.g., quartermaster officer, antiaircraft officer, transportation officer, etc.; Personal Staff. [Joint Staff Officers Guide AFSC Pub 1 – 1997] Definition: The personal staff group is directly responsible to the commander. It includes any assistants needed to handle matters requiring close personal control by the commander. The commander's aide or aide-de-camp, legal advisor, public affairs adviser, inspector general, and political affairs adviser (or international affairs adviser) are generally on the commander's personal staff.

[10]John F. Kirby, *Helping Shape Today's Battlefield: Public Affairs as an Operational Function*," Essays 2000 (Washington D.C.: National Defense University, 02 May 2000), 5. Lieutenant Commander John F. Kirby, USN (College of Naval Command and Staff), earned

third place for this essay in the 2000 Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Strategy Essay Competition.

[11]U.S. Department of the Army, *Public Affairs Operations*, Field Manual 46-1, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 30 May 1997), 32.

[12]Lynda Liddy, "The Strategic Corporal: Some Requirements in Training and Education," *Australian Army Journal,* vol. II, no. 2 (Autumn 2005): 140.

[13]Schein, Internet; accessed 05 February 2006.

[14]"U.S. Occupation of Fallujah," *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*, 29 January 2006, available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/US_occupation_of_Fallujah; Internet; accessed 02 February 2006.

[15]"News Arab World: Falluja Troops Told To Shoot On Sight," *Aljazeera.Net,* 09 December 2004 [news on-line]; available from http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/75E3CA31-83B0-46FD-A762-0C1157C408F9.htm; Internet; accessed 24 October 2005.

[16]*The Rest of the Story* is a weekday radio segment told by Paul Harvey. Beginning as a part of his newscasts in 1946 and then broadcast as its own series on the ABC Radio Networks on May 10, 1976 and continuing until the present, it consists of a quaint "factual" story about American history, usually with the narrative's main character being a famous American. From: *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*, 21 December 2005, available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Rest_of_the_Story; Internet; accessed 12 February 2006.

[17]Schein, Internet; accessed 05 February 2006.

[18]"Stay within your lane" is a metaphor used in various segments of society – from an Army perspective it literally refers to tactical live-fire "lanes" where weapon muzzle awareness and situational awareness with respect to troops on the left and right are critical to accomplish the mission safely and effectively – literally a life-saving measure. The metaphor is often extrapolated and used widely to refer to your business; when applied to speaking and in particular, speaking to the media, it means to talk about issues within your area of expertise at your appropriate level. There has been a tendency to see this "lane" as a restraint, but with coaching and leadership, it should become obvious that each soldier at every level has a story to tell "within their lanes" – a very potentially empowering concept.

[19]Brayton Harris, "To Whomever Might be Interested: The Military and the Media," *Civil War Newspapers, 1861-1865* [on-line]; available from http://www.civil-war-newspapers.com/military-media-relations.htm; Internet; accessed 18 November 2005; and J. B. Calvert, "The Electromagnetic Telegraph: A Technical History of the 19th-century Electromagnetic Telegraph, with Special Reference to the Origin and Variety of the Alphabets, or Codes, that were Used," 19 May 2004; available from http://www.du.edu/~jcalvert/tel/morse/morse.htm; internet; accessed 12 February 2006.

[20]Brendan R. McLane, "Reporting from the Sandstorm: An Appraisal of Embedding," *Parameters* Vol. XXXIV, no. 1 (Spring 2004,): 79. Lieutenant Commander Brendan R. McLane, USN, Executive Officer, USS Simpson has penned several articles and book reviews on military

to media relations including a winning entry in the 2003 Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Strategy Essay Competition.

[21]Gregory M. Hannan, "The Military and the Media: An Historical and Cultural Examination" (Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio: Air Force Institute of Technology, 1998): 6.

[22]Ibid., 9.

[23]Ibid., 19.

[24]Office of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Report by CJCS Media-Military Relations Panel (Sidle Panel)* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 23 August 1984); available from http://www.ndu.edu/library/epubs/20030710a.pdf; Internet; accessed 02 March 2006.

[25]Hannan, 19.

[26]Charles W. Ricks, *The Military-News Media Relationship: Thinking Forward* (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 1993), vi.

[27]Nancy Ethiel, ed., *The Military and the Media: Facing the Future* (Wheaton, Ill.: Robert M. McCormick Tribune Foundation, 1998), 61.

[28]Rivers J. Johnson Jr., *DoD Public Affairs Strategies and Means During OIF: Were They Effective?*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 18 March 2005), 14.

[29]U.S. Department of Defense, *Public Affairs Guidance (PAG) On Embedding Media During Possible Future Operations/Deployments in the U.S. Central Command's (CENTCOM) Area of Responsibility (AOR)*, DoD Message 101900Z February 2003 (10 February 2003).

[30]U.S. Secretary of Defense, *Joint Public Affairs Operations*, U.S. Department of Defense Directive 5400.13, para 4.42 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 09 January 1996), 5.

[31]Ibid., para 4.47, 6.

[32]Field Manual 46-1, 24-25.

[33]U.S. Secretary of Defense, *Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (ASD (PA))*, U.S. Department of Defense Directive 5122.5, encl 3 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 27 September 2000).

[34]Joint Pub 3-61, *Public Affairs* (May 9, 2005); the previous version dated May 14, 1997, originally titled: *Doctrine for Public Affairs in Joint Operations,* contains no mention of embeds or embedding.

[35]McLane, 77.

[36]"What is 'Stockholm Syndrome'?" *Ask Yahoo!*, 24 March 2003, available from http://ask.yahoo.com/20030324.html; internet; accessed 08 March 2006; and "Stockholm Syndrome," *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*, 05 March 2006, available from

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholm_syndrome; Internet; accessed 08 March 2006. Stockholm Syndrome describes the behavior of kidnap victims who, over time, become sympathetic to their captors. The name derives from a 1973 hostage incident in Stockholm, Sweden. At the end of six days of captivity in a bank, several kidnap victims actually resisted rescue attempts, and afterwards refused to testify against their captors. The *Stockholm syndrome* is a psychological response of a hostage, or an individual in a hostage-like situation (e.g. dependent child, battered wife, etc.), in which the more powerful person (a) has the power to put the individual's life in danger or at least the power to harm the individual, and (b) occasionally exercises this power in order to show that he or she is able to use it if the victim will not conform to the more powerful person's will. The main symptom of the syndrome is the individual's seeming *loyalty* to the more powerful person in spite of the danger (or at least risk) in which they are placed as a result of this loyalty.

[37]Robert Jensen, "The Military's Media," *The Progressive Magazine*, May 2003 [journal on-line]; available from http://www.progressive.org/may03/jen0503.html; internet; accessed 05 December 2005. Robert Jensen is a founding member of the Nowar Collective (www.nowarcollective.com), a journalism professor at the University of Texas at Austin, and author of "Writing Dissent: Taking Radical Ideas from the Margins to the Mainstream"; and Glenn T. Starnes, "Leveraging the Media: The Embedded Media Program In Operation Iraqi Freedom," *Center for Strategic Leadership, U.S. Army War College* vol. S04-06 (July 2004).

[38]Dan Rather and the reporters of CBS News, *America at War: The Battle for Iraq: A View From the Frontlines* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), xii.

[39]McLane, 77.

[40]Douglas Porch, "No Bad Stories: The American Media-Military Relationship," *Naval War College Review* vol. LV, no. 1 (Winter 2002,): 85. Douglas Porch is a professor of national security affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California. His work has appeared in numerous publications, including The Washington Post, The Washington Post Book World, The Guardian, and many military and historical journals. He has served as professor of strategy at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, and is a frequent lecturer at the United States Marine Corps University at Quantico, Virginia and the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. He is the author of seven books, including The Conquest of Morocco, The Conquest of the Sahara, and The French Foreign Legion, and The French Secret Services: From the Dreyfus Affair to the Gulf War (FSG, 1995).

[41]Thom Shanker, *New York Times* reporter, email interview with the author, 21 February 2006. Thom Shanker was has served as an embedded journalist in multiple theaters of war, including several weeks with the Headquarters of Multi-National Corps, Iraq from 2004 to 2005.

[42]The author conducted an informal poll, via email questionnaire, in February 2006. It was distributed to 17 Army colonels and lieutenant colonels from the Army War College Resident Class of 2006. Results included 12 responses from the 17 members polled. The following is a summary of the questions and answers: (1) As a military professional, in terms of fair reporting – defined as unbiased, honest and factual reporting, not necessarily positive reporting - do you think there is any difference in quality of stories from embedded reporters vice unilateral (folks wandering around on their own) reporters? Of the 12 responses, 11 responded definitely yes, based on deployment experience and first-hand observation, 1 responded yes based on military exercise experience and outside looking in observation. (2) If you think there is a difference in

media coverage, which is more favorable to the military? (embedded or unilateral) All 12 respondents were unanimous that embedded journalists were more favorable from a military perspective (3) If you think there is no appreciable difference, why? All 12 respondents either responded with there is an appreciable difference in favor of embeds or with not applicable (based on their answers to #3 above). (4) Any first hand anecdotal experiences you'd like to comment on (optional)? A total of 9 officers of the 12 respondents provided additional commentary.

[43]Fair = S: (adj) fair, just (free from favoritism or self-interest or bias or deception; or conforming with established standards or rules) *"a fair referee"; "fair deal"; "on a fair footing"; "a fair fight"; "by fair means or foul"* S: (adj) impartial, fair (showing lack of favoritism) *"the cold neutrality of an impartial judge"* From: *WordNet: a lexical database for the English language,* Cognitive Science Laboratory, Princeton University, 221 Nassau St., Princeton, NJ 08542. Available from http://wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=fair; Internet, accessed 16 February 2006.

[44]Office of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Public Affairs,* Joint Publication 3-61 (Washington, D.C.: Joint Staff, 09 May 2005), vii.; US Constitution, Amendment 1: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

[45]Joint Pub 3-61, *Public Affairs* (May 9, 2005), viii-ix.

[46]Geraldo Rivera, Fox News, host of "At Large with Geraldo Rivera" embedded with CJTF-7 and MNF-I for four short-duration trips times during the author's 14-month tour in Iraq between January 2004 and February 2005.

[47]Franklin Childress, *Operation* Iraqi *Freedom Media Embedding: Wave of the Future or Flash in the Pan*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 18 March 2005).

[48]Joseph G. Curtin, Chief of Army Media Relations, email interview with the author, 22 February 2006.

[49]Shanker.

[50]"The Army Public Affairs Mission Statement," *The United States Army Public Affairs Website*, available from http://www4.army.mil/ocpa/; Internet; accessed 24 October 2005. "Public Affairs fulfills the Army's obligation to keep the American people and the Army informed, and helps to establish the conditions that lead to confidence in America's Army and its readiness to conduct operations in peacetime, conflict and war."

[51]Daniel L. Baggio, The author has served ten years in Army public affairs assignments. These include joint assignments at North American Aerospace Defense Command, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, and most recently as the PAO and spokesman for Fort Hood and The Third U.S. Armored Corps. Combat zone experience included fourteen months in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom and multiple short deployments to the Balkans during the Kosovo Air Campaign and NATO Humanitarian Mission to Albania.

[52]Shanker.

[53]Daniel L. Baggio. Based on discussions with the author and several individuals; because of a promises made for non-specific attribution, the name any of the concerned parties or locations will not be disclosed.

[54]Curtin.

[55]Daniel L. Baggio. "Continuum of Transparency" is an original concept by the author. It describes the ultimate military to media relationship replete with savvy leadership at all levels, educated soldiers at all levels, and a virtual partnership with the media built on trust and interpersonal relationships.

[56]Mary Jo Hatch, *Organizational Theory* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1997), 217-220. Based on Edgar H. Schein's Symbolic-Interpretive Organizational Theory; and Mary Jo Hatch and Majken Schultz, "Relations between organizational culture, identity and image," *European Journal of Marketing* vol. 31, no. 5 (1997): 356-365; available from http://www.emeraldinsight. com/Insight/ViewContentServlet?Filename=Published/EmeraldFullTextArticle/Articles/00703105 02.html; Internet; accessed 12 February 2006.

[57]Schein, *Organizational Culture & Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992), 231.

[58]Daniel L. Baggio. "Opening the door with the commander primarily on my interpersonal skills and by extrapolation the intellectual transfer of the perception of technical competence and conceptual ability, I am able to establish or at least plant the seed for embedding and reinforcing mechanisms." This is original thought on the interplay of course concepts and the dynamic between leaders and subordinates within a system or culture.

[59]Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War – Indexed Edition,* trans. and eds. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 1989), 119.

[60]Schein, *Organizational Culture & Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992), 81.

[61]Childress.

[62]Rivers J. Johnson Jr., *DoD Public Affairs Strategies and Means During OIF: Were They Effective?*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 18 March 2005); and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), CAAT II Initial Impressions Report (IIR), Chapter 1: Information Operations Topic C: *Public Affairs and the Media* – Newsletter No. 04-13," [n.d.]; available from http://www.globalsecurity.org.military/library/report/call_04-13_chap01-c.htm; Internet; accessed 05 December 2005.

[63]Schein, Internet; accessed 05 February 2006.

[64]Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1992), Ch. 12, 228-253.

[65]Shambach.

[66]Edward D. Loewen, FA46 history spreadsheet, sent by email to author, 03 February 2006. Spreadsheet indicates 369 records including all the officer basic branch, year group, and record status. Totals included 229 from Combat Arms, 51 from Combat Support, and 89 from Combat Service Support. The highest branches by population were infantry 74, field artillery 51, armor 46, adjutant general 39, aviation 37, and military police 23.

[67]Curtin.

[68]Donald H. Rumsfeld, Remarks to the "Council on Foreign Relations" (New York, 17 February 2006).

[69]Vincent K. Brooks, "Leading a Culture of Engagement – Our Call to Duty," *The Army Worldwide Public Affairs Symposium Website*, available from http://www.fbcinc.com/wpas/ main.asp; Internet; accessed 25 February 2006.

[70]Shanker.

[71]Shambach.